

Newton Elementary
School Organizational Team Minutes
2/4/25
3:30

The Newton ES School Organizational Team meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm on 2-4-2025. The meeting was held in the library and virtually at <https://meet.google.com/bzw-hhch-tmr>.

Voting Members present:

Kasey O'Horo, Parent	Pulamahaheo Berg, Licensed Staff
Gina Topor, Parent (arrived 3:45)	Samantha Olson, Licensed Staff
Rebecca Hickey, Parent	Lindsey Douglas, Support Staff
Kristan Sanchez, Parent	Meaghan McGowan, Principal

Non-Voting Members present:

Ms Yelton, Staff
Ms. Wagstaff, Staff
Ms Lopez, Staff
Ms. McCoy, Staff
Ms Heller, Staff
Ms. Decker, Staff

Members absent:

None

Online:

Courtney Campbell, Christen Campbell, Robin Anderson, Kerri Leonard

Agenda Items

1. **Welcome, Roll Call, & Approval of Minutes** The minutes from the meeting dated 1-30-24 were presented and motion to be approved "as presented" by Kasey O'Horo and Meaghan McGowan seconded the motion.

2. **Old Items**

- 2.1 **Budget Review & Vote**
- 2.2 **School Events /Updates**

3. **New Items**

3.1 **Budget Review and Vote**

UPDATE: Meaghan followed up per last meeting with various options. In addition, since a few positions were being considered for a cut, Meahgan also created information about what each of those positions entail so it is clear how those duties play into daily activities.

- splitting APs - RESULT: no other schools interested
- cutting the office aid position OR shifting the position to work directly with students/ in-classroom - RESULT: other school principals are not interested in splitting. Teachers voted to not lose the office aide. Ms McCoy also mentioned she has never seen an office function without an aide - they are essential. Current office aide also works closely with ESL, Spanish speaking families, after school tutoring, CPR, clerk, etc.
- splitting a music specialist - RESULT: Hannah Brown was the only school potentially interested, however their musical specialist would have seniority. Ms Wagstaff is not interested in splitting.
- staff meeting about eliminating a custodian's position - RESULT: staff considered this mainly because the custodian wasn't meeting expectations. However, if this position is cut, school may never get that position back and the cleanliness is not up to par. Meaghan asked about cutting hours for custodian but she has trimmed hours as much as is allowed.
- splitting a custodian - RESULT: no other schools interested

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- Cutting PE Aide - RESULT: class sizes are too large for one teacher without an aide. Ms Heller asked about the special ed aide that is also at recess. But those aides are specifically assigned to their kids. It wouldn't give the teacher enough help.
- Custodian resigned in Jan. If that position is not filled until fall - will this help give extra rollover funds? RESULT: Possibly yes, but not enough to save a teacher. The school will still need to pay a sub from those funds. The school is hopeful that a new custodian will eventually be hired and have higher standards to do a better job than the last custodian.
- Teachers and staff were given the opportunity to vote about budget and cuts (results supplied by Meaghan). The majority goes to NO MORE ADDITIONAL CUTS, LEAVE PROPOSAL AS-IS. The next highest vote was to eliminate the full time custodian position (which is currently open). However, that still doesn't provide enough funds to save a teaching position.

FEEDBACK FROM SOT:

- Rebekah would like to see as many teaching positions saved (over support staff) if possible as that disrupts the students the least and gives smaller class sizes.
- Samantha stated the teachers and staff tried to really look at the proposal from a numbers position, rather than a personal position to make it balanced. No one wants to lose support staff, because that is less time for teachers to focus in their classroom
- Kasey noted that unfortunately, it doesn't matter right now how we feel as these are the numbers we have to work with until the fall when final figures are given. However, she would like to propose that if the school receives funds for one more position, it will go to bring back Ms Wagstaff to teach music. Others agreed that Ms Wagstaff specifically goes above and beyond in her position, more so than others in the past, and is truly enriching student's lives.
- It is officially noted that everyone is disappointed that such hard changes are required. Unfortunately, all schools within CCSD are losing teachers.

VOTE: Affirmative vote was made by all 8 members, unanimously:
APPROVE THE PROPOSED BUDGET AS-IS .

3.2 CONTACTING CCSD: Gina will send out a link to contact CCSD directly, as parents to have a voice before the legislators meet. It is important that they know about the position we are in and how it is a disruption to our students and impeding our ability to meet goals. The budget will be based on the number of students. But it is suggested that there be a separate fund for lawsuits or other unexpected expenses from the district so those payments don't impact school's funding directly. After the district took away the zone variance, it has affected our numbers greatly. Sports are being cut at high school levels as well where kids can't be double enrolled to play sports but also get college credit, which is such a disservice to those kids. Another buzz word is equity: LVA is 75% music; if programs are cut at the elementary level, students won't have that exposure and opportunity to apply for art schools at higher education levels, which will then disrupt those schools later on. Letters need to go out ASAP. The trustees have the power to make suggestions to legislation when they meet. Also, there has been very little to no media presence on this issue. Gina will follow up with contacts to see if getting more exposure could bring more awareness. Contact Gina if you are interested in speaking directly to any media.

3.3 Potential Sponsors/Donors

Gina suggested we have a list of how a business or person can help our school with large donations or sponsorships. IE: Contribution of \$13,000 goes to purchase the program LEXIA for the school, etc. By supporting specific programs, that can help free up funds for the school in other areas.

3.4 School Events/Updates

Kasey asked if there have been any concerns about immigration visits. Meaghan reinforced that the school will uphold every child's right to a public education, per the email that went out Jan. 23. 2025. No one will have access to a child unless it is a parent or approved contact.

4.0 Information

4.1 Next Meeting: Newton Elementary, March 11, 2025, Tuesday at 3:30.

5.0 Public Comment Period (Two (2) minutes maximum allotted)

6.0 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 4:25 by Samantha Olson, 2nd by Pulamahaheo Berg.